

Malay lobby seeks Dr M's aid in tussle with Petronas over demands
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By Md Izwan

KUALA LUMPUR, March 7 — Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was today urged to step in and resolve a dispute between national oil firm Petronas and a lobby group over demands to look into Bumiputera business interests.

The United Malay Economic Action Council (MTEM) again brought up allegations that Petronas had failed to protect Bumiputera interests but had instead given priority to foreign firms

"MTEM calls upon Tun Dr Mahathir (picture) as the adviser of Petronas to urgently address this issue of the 'rot at the top'," MTEM CEO Mohd Nizam Mahsar told reporters today.

He also said that a meeting between the MTEM and Petronas president and CEO Datuk Shamsul Azhar Abbas last month was fruitless.

"Today MTEM expresses its disappointment with Petronas which has failed to give any commitments on a few of our demands as discussed in the February 13 meeting.

"From Petronas' reply that we received on February 20, they (Petronas) did not give any clear stand on what we had demanded," Mohd Nizam added.

MTEM also slammed Shamsul for allegedly making a few statements that tarnished the group's image, which purportedly included an accusation that MTEM wanted to get contracts and projects from Petronas.

On February 2, MTEM, an umbrella body of 63 Malay business groups including various Malay Chambers of Commerce, had called on Shamsul to quit the state oil company's board before Election 2013.

MTEM had accused the Petronas chairman of sidelining Bumiputera companies, including those that were qualified, when it dished out contracts for its projects.

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